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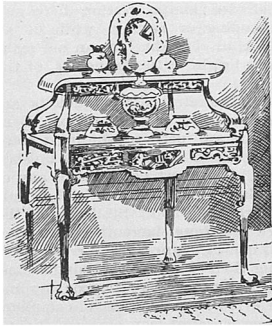
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# THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

## THE MODERN CHINESE STYLE.



IN Europe, particularly in England and France, the Chinese style has been utilized in the production of many quaint and beautiful articles of cabinet work. The French call the style "*Chinoise*," and under this heading some very beautiful flights of fancy have been realized in decidedly attractive and original furniture.

The art of the Celestial Empire is an almost unexplored field for designers, and is one that will readily reward inquiry as to its peculiar forms of decoration.

Real Chinese furniture and cabinet work is to a great extent extravagantly grotesque; hence it is of first necessity that designers, in endeavoring to adapt the Chinese style to modern requirements, should avoid going to extremes, and only make use of those elementary principles of Chinese art that are not only consistent with modern western taste, but are also worthy of practical consideration by the average manufacturer of furniture.

Furniture of this kind produced in rosewood, or dark mahogany and relieved by beautifully executed bronzes and inlays sparkling with silver and mother-of-pearl, with here and there panels of carefully executed fret work, will give to modern furniture characteristic features of form and color that will prove unmistakably attractive.

In fact the Chinese style not only consists of a singular grace of form, but requires a lavish use of the metallic element, which is by no means confined to mere handles and hinges. Metal work may be used in the form of marquetry or carving, and engraved or pierced corner plates to the drawers are quite *au fait*.

We give some sketches of furniture that has been actually manufactured in the characteristic spirit of the Chinese art. Fig. 1 is a little what-not of fanciful device, suited to those who like to furnish in a bizarre manner. It exhibits the skillful way in which the *ebenists* have, under the excuse of copying the Chinese, added another style to modern French furniture.

Fig. 2 is a very useful and picturesque looking little table. It would be difficult to imagine anything better suited for the display of pieces of bric-a-brac and treasures. The curled up top is a line of shaping that would be impossible under any other title than that of "*Chinoise*," and the legs, which are very graceful, could hardly be classified under any European

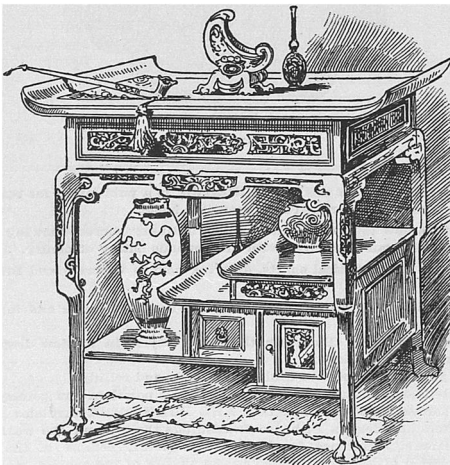


Fig. 2.

style. Fig. 3, like Fig. 2, is a Parisian idea, and is a fanciful variation of the bureau bookcase. The under part is open, and the open upper part affords shelf accommodations for various art treasures, and it is altogether a sensible, useful, and decorative piece of furniture.

Fig. 4 is an illustration of modern Chinese furniture as made in Berlin. The group consists of a chair, ornamental stand, and sofa chair in ebony, with bronze furnishings. The occasional chair on the left, in conjunction with the settees, with its spreading, flat cut-back and arms, are very inviting and pleasing pieces of furniture. There is a total escape from the cast iron conditions of the regular Renaissance style. In the irregular beauty of the chair it is easy to discover the frolicsome pleasure of the designer, who is glad to escape from the Louis Quinze.

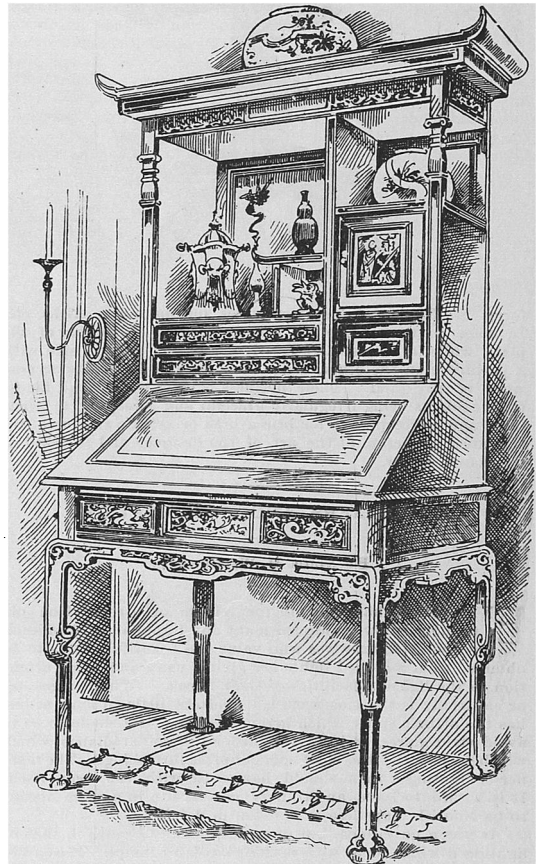


Fig. 3.

The color and stamped Chinese and Japanese leathers adopted for these chairs contrasts well with their ebony frames, and considerably enhances their beauty.

Fig. 5 is a bedroom suite designed in the grotesque spirit of Chinese art. The furniture would come out effectively if manufactured in dark mahogany, the general effect being greatly enhanced by the introduction of brass work finishings as indicated. The suite is unique and pleasing.

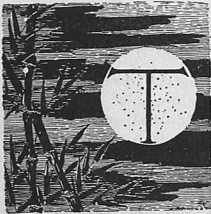
We are indebted to the *Cabinet Maker* of London, for the illustrations presented herewith.

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER settles every vexed question on house decoration.

# THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

## DRY GOODS STORES AS FURNISHING EMPORIUMS.

BY JAMES CARRUTHERS.



THE leading dry goods firms in our large cities are purveyors of articles of house furnishing and decoration, and the public have the advantage of a wide range of comparison in articles of each class provided by good selection and skill, and are aided in their selection by the judgment and experience of those superintending the several departments.

Drapery designs for windows well merit attention in their establishments. Some exquisite Oriental stuffs are to be seen. The festoon dra-

peries, now so popular, form a striking feature. One novelty for window consists in the longitudinal alternation of two different materials, one opaque, the other transparent. Some of the valances are of fringed swags with silk covered lattice. A brocade for curtains has a ground of gray, on which carnations

never elsewhere been executed, due mainly to the special vegetable dyes employed, they allow of the designs being surveyed as a whole, which is not the case with carpets. They are to be chosen less for their designs than the general effect of their colorings. Some of the large Turkish carpets lately imported have the peculiarity of a center design in Turkish characters—presumably passages from the Koran, these in bright colors, whilst the intervening and larger space between centers and borders, are in dark lustrous colors. Eastern carpets would generally look better with less profusion of ornament. The want of reticence so visible in this profusion is a mere child-like display with a correspondingly weak effect, and so failing of the highest results of art. Not a few of these carpets have plain centers in colors, such as deep blue, restful to the vision, and which are set off by richly manipulated borders. The patterns of American carpets shown in these stores have generally the merit of quiescent effect, saved, however, from tameness by variations of tints, subordination of colors to leading lines, and a freedom in floral distribution. Some of the lightest hues are characterized by extreme vivacity. Choice combinations of colors in designs, giving a pleasant sense of warmth and breadth, are purplish violet, bluish green and orange, turquoise blue, yellow and purple, violet and light rose color, deep blue and golden brown, chocolate and light blue, with deep red and gray and warm green. The mosque carpets shown are in accord with a

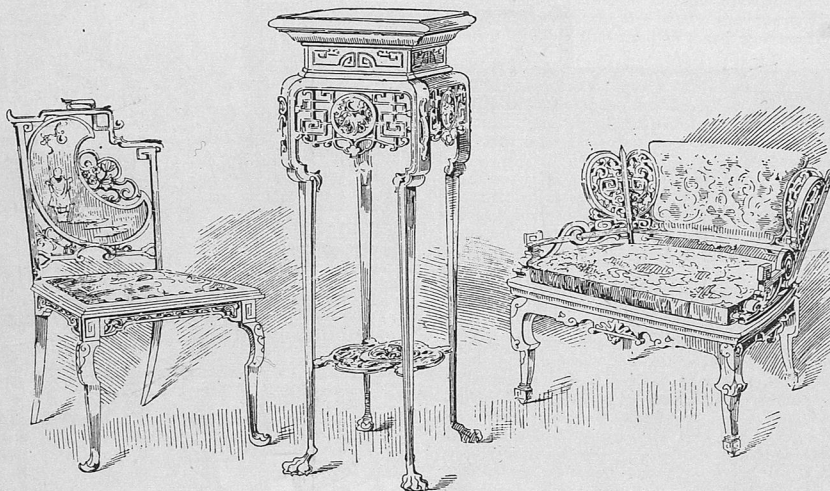


Fig. 4.

and roses are worked in gold. A tapestry *fleur-de-lis* brocade, adapted either to curtains or for covering furniture, has ground of blue green, the flower in a lighter shade edged with gold thread. Then there are beautiful lines of satin damask and brocatelles and silk for windows and portieres, displaying flowers and ferns in combination in delightful colorings. A Bengal satin, showing iridescent hues when slightly disturbed, is very beautiful. Among novelties for draping there is a crinkled silk formed from the cocoons of the wild silk-worm, in several choice colorings. Oriental table covers, enriched with minute ornamental forms, are well calculated to heighten the effect of a handsomely furnished room. The Turkish scarfs of many colors are admirably suited for display as disposed with a certain negligé air on various articles of furniture. For draping mirrors gauze silks appear in new art colors, some of them with outlined designs in gold and silver thread.

In the large collections of oriental floor rugs—of a great variety of patterns,—each weaving district in the east presenting its own special characteristics in designs, evidence is afforded of their increased appreciation. Looking to the scale on which dry goods houses have provided themselves with these attractive articles, it is seen that they long since anticipated the tendency of public taste in this direction to which, indeed, more elegant furnishings have led the way.

In addition to their grateful tread they also delight the eye, and whilst affording colors of hues and tints that have

prescribed arrangement. Each consists of two distinct designs on the upper transverse portion of which the priest stands, the worshipers taking their position on the lower parallelogram. Among the decided novelties are Turkish cushions for settees and sofas which present a rich appearance. The details of ornament are very minute.

Lightness of structure combined with requisite strength is in request in furniture. The very condition thus imposed would seem to stimulate novelty in design. The irregular but picturesque arrangement of shelves, primarily derived from Japanese artisans, is well carried out in cabinets and various receptacles. Dry goods men do not aspire to make a display of antique furniture, and in this they are wise. What they show in furniture has a certain air of American domesticity about it, and there is enough variety to suit all tastes. A large proportion of suites of furniture is in light woods, on which there has been a run for a length of time, as a reaction against dark hard woods. Light wood, too, is well fitted to display the light, airy French style of construction, and to show to advantage the delicate capricious carving, in the designing of which the French are such adepts. Light hues would seem to stimulate the inventive genius of designers, for its use has resulted in novel and most graceful forms. One of the latest novelties consists of hanging cupboards and cabinets combined, to be supported on brackets and attached to the wall, thus saving floor space. The newest designs are quite aerial, consisting simply of convolutions of